



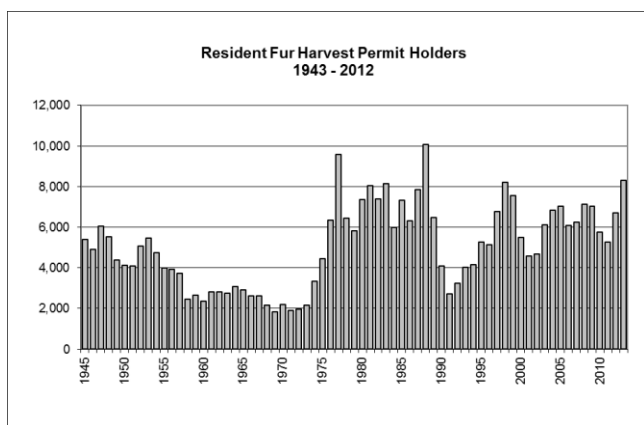
FUR HARVEST SURVEY 2012/2013 SEASON

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Nebraska Game and Parks Commission
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Permits:

A total of 8,288 fur harvest permits were sold to Nebraska residents in 2012 (up from 6,708 in 2011). Twenty-six fur harvest permits were sold to nonresidents from eight different states (CO, IA, KS, MO, PA, SD, VA and WI).



Survey:

A fur harvest survey was sent to 8,030 fur harvest permit holders. The response rate to the survey was 19% yielding a total of 1,520 responses. In addition, surveys were sent to 35 licensed fur buyers, of which 14% (5) responded to the survey.

Seasons:

Species	Trap and Hunt	Trap Only	Hunt only
Muskrat	N/A	Nov 1 – Mar. 31	N/A
Beaver	N/A	Nov 1 – Mar. 31	N/A
Bobcat	Dec. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	N/A
Raccoon	Nov. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	Sept. 1 – Oct. 31
Opossum	Nov. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	Sept. 1 – Oct. 31
Weasel	Nov. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	N/A
Mink	Nov. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	N/A
Red Fox	Nov. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	N/A
Gray Fox	Nov. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	N/A
Badger	Nov. 1 – end Feb.	N/A	N/A
Skunk	Year-round	N/A	N/A

Harvest:

The estimated harvest during the 2012/2013 season was higher compared with the five-year average. Badger, coyote and opossum showed the greatest increase (103%, 101% and 75% higher respectively). No species showed a decrease compared to the five-year average. The total estimated harvest for the

2012/2013 season was higher than the 2011/2012 season with coyote and woodchuck showing the greatest increase (up 85% and 83% respectively). Muskrat, bobcat, and beaver were the only species to show a decrease (-26%, -11% and -6% respectively). Continued high pelt prices likely caused an increase in harvest effort. Furharvesters reported that 32% of coyotes and 11% of red foxes harvested showed symptoms of mange.

	Estimated Harvest		Total harvest	Previous Season	5-Yr Average 2008-2012
	Hunt	Trap			
Raccoon	67,810	193,459	261,269	201,927	156,025
Muskrat	0	32,530	32,530	44,209	28,728
Opossum	7,209	36,518	43,727	27,752	24,984
Coyote ¹	23,551	22,679	46,230	25,012	22,994
Beaver	0	18,219	18,219	19,375	11,502
Striped Skunk	4,107	15,816	19,923	14,100	13,452
Badger	1,877	4,460	6,337	3,609	3,124
Mink	493	4,360	4,853	3,317	2,920
Red Fox	1,052	2,929	3,981	3,128	3,749
Bobcat ²	463	1,248	1,711	1,913	1,425
Woodchuck	612	659	1,271	696	912

¹ Includes only harvest numbers provided by harvesters

² Total harvest based on pelt tagging, hunt column includes harvested road kills

Nonresponder Bias:

The results of a 2003 phone survey indicate that active harvesters were 4.7 times more likely to respond to the fur harvest survey than those that did not participate in the 2002/2003 season. As a result, the proportion of inactive harvesters is greater in the population of nonresponders, likely resulting in an overestimation of total harvest estimates if simple extrapolation is used. Adjusting the 2012/2013 harvest data, based on the findings of the 2002/2003 follow up phone survey yields substantially lower total harvest estimates than the non-adjusted extrapolation.

Species	harvest not adjusted	Estimated total harvest adjusted for nonresponder bias
Raccoon	261,269	193,595
Coyote	46,230	35,866
Opossum	43,727	34,340
Muskrat	32,530	23,204
Striped Skunk	19,923	16,087
Beaver	18,219	16,709
Badger	6,337	4,996
Mink	4,853	3,411
Red Fox	3,981	2,884

Fur Harvesters:

Eighty-one percent of fur harvest survey responders indicated that they participated in the 2012/2013 fur harvest. Of those that were successful, 28% only trapped, 26% only hunted and 46% both trapped and hunted furbearers. The number of participants was higher than the previous year (979 compared to 837 in 2011/2012). The average successful trapper harvested more than twice as many furbearers as the average hunter (53 vs. 23). According to the fur harvest survey, each fur harvester received permission from an average four landowners to harvest fur on their lands.

Depredation:

The species most commonly harvested for depredation control purposes were raccoon, opossum and coyote.

Species	Number harvested for depredation	Percent of total harvest
Raccoon	22,472	9%
Opossum	6,603	15%
Coyote	6,337	14%
Beaver	6,270	34%
Striped Skunk	3,654	18%
Muskrat	1,478	5%
Badger	985	16%
Woodchuck	872	69%
Red Fox	246	6%
Bobcat	220	13%
Mink	146	3%

Pelts:

Based on results from the annual fur buyer survey, overall prices for wild pelts of most furbearing species have increased compared with the previous season, and the five-year average. Opossum, muskrat and red fox pelt prices have experienced the greatest increases with average prices 107%, 71% and 32% higher than during the 2011/2012 season. Striped skunk, badger, beaver, and muskrat prices showed the only decreases with average prices 45%, 29%, 25% and 13% lower than the 2011/2012 season. Bobcat pelts remain the most valuable with average prices \$145 higher than any other furbearer.

Pelt Prices:

Species	2012-2013	2011-2012	5 Year Average
Bobcat	\$167.03	\$186.29	\$103.56
Red Fox	\$21.91	\$16.62	\$12.33
Coyote	\$17.08	\$14.30	\$12.84
Mink	\$12.93	\$12.82	\$11.30
Raccoon	\$10.19	\$10.09	\$9.51
Beaver	\$7.82	\$10.36	\$9.26
Muskrat	\$6.45	\$3.78	\$3.18

Badger	\$5.79	\$8.18	\$7.76
Opossum	\$1.75	\$0.84	\$1.17
Striped Skunk	\$1.00	\$1.82	\$2.83

Early Raccoon Hunting-Only Season:

Estimates from the fur harvest survey indicate that harvesters who participated in the early raccoon season killed an estimated 6,230 raccoons (compared with 5,421 in 2011). The early raccoon-hunting season accounted for 3% of all raccoons taken during the entire 2012/2013 season (1% higher than in 2011/2012). Concerns with the season have been voiced by raccoon trappers fearing reduced trapping success due to localized population reduction by hunters prior to the trapping season. Fur buyers are concerned with the influx of valueless pelts on the market (raccoon pelts usually do not prime up until the middle of November).

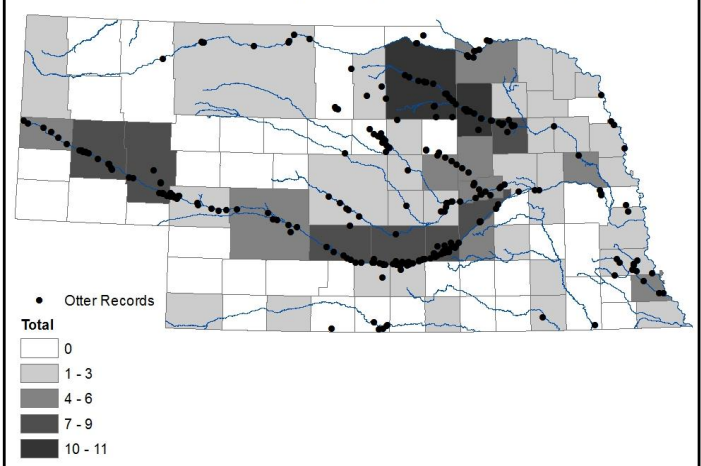
Gray Fox Tagging:

In 2002, a tagging requirement was implemented for all gray fox taken in Nebraska. No gray foxes were tagged during the 2012/2013 season.

River Otter Distribution:

Information from fur harvesters regarding river otter distribution was collected through the 2012/2013 fur harvest survey. River otters or their sign were reported in 13 counties with no previously documented presence. This information will be used to focus survey efforts and determine the current distribution of this threatened species.

of Fur Harvesters Reporting River Otters by County



Special thanks to all fur harvesters and fur buyers that made this analysis possible by responding to the fur harvest and fur buyer survey!